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In Support of SB 999, AAC A Just Transition to Climate-Protective Energy and
Community Investment

Hi Senator Kushner and Representative Porter, and Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

Thanks for having this public hearing today. My name is Sarah Ganong, and I'm a Hartford resident and the Campaigns Director at Connecticut Working Families, a grassroots organization fighting for an economy that works for everyone, a planet safe for all living things, and a democracy where every voice matters.

I am writing today on behalf of CT Working Families to show our strong support for Connecticut SB 999, An Act Concerning a Just Transition to Climate-Protective Energy Production and Community Investment.

Here at Working Families, we could not be more excited to testify on a bill that supports a just transition for workers and our environment. We know that the health and well-being of working people and people of color is tied up in the jobs we have, the communities we inhabit, and the environment around us. This bill benefits all of these, and more.

SB 999 is a community and economic development bill. We know that a just transition to a low-carbon economy must reduce economic inequality, address poverty, reduce health disparities, and ensure our communities are safe. SB 999 will create good-paying careers for Connecticut residents that need them most, including by targeting historically disadvantaged communities for job training and apprenticeship programs. And the community benefits agreement provision will ensure that host communities aren't taken advantage of by renewable energy developers.

Ensuring that unionized Connecticut workers are hired onto projects is essential to the sustained growth of the renewable energy sector in our state. The current trend of solar developers paying minimum wage and using unskilled, transient labor does not benefit Connecticut's workers. The out-of-state private developers, who benefit from tax- and ratepayer-funded state subsidies, should be required to pay workers fairly and contribute to the development of Connecticut's clean technology workforce. Workforce

development, prevailing wage requirements, and project labor agreements will ensure equity in the growing clean technology sector.

After a decade of the hottest years on record, and unforeseen storms here in the northeast, we know climate change is not a distant problem. It's here and harming our environment and neighbors in Connecticut right now, from the working family that loses power in a storm to the coastal flooding along I95. Historically disadvantaged communities, including communities of color and low-income communities, disproportionately bear climate change's environmental and socio-economic impacts.

As Connecticut invests in a transition to a low-carbon economy, Connecticut workers should fill the job created. Ensuring that proposed projects are evaluated for their ratepayer, environmental, *and* labor practice impacts is essential for a just transition. That's why I strongly support SB 999 and urge you to vote in favor. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ganong,
Connecticut Working Families